

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 28th February 2019

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PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

MARKET LANE ROAD/HOLLOW HILL LANE NETWORK – PROPOSALS

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide information on the planned changes to Market Lane/Hollow Hill Lane and its potential impact on the local road network.

2. **Recommendation**

That the Panel note the information regarding proposals for Market Lane and make comments upon them.

3 **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Whilst not directly supporting any of the wellbeing priorities, the local road network and its operation improves accessibility for all residents. This particularly applies to those with limited mobility (e.g. disability, the elderly).

3b **Five Year Plan outcomes**

A high quality and reliable road network supports the following Five Year Plan outcome:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay

4 **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(b) **Risk Management**

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no legal or Human Rights Act implications relating to the content of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

No EIA has been undertaken as part of this update however Network Rail will need to assess as part of the DCO process the impact on local communities and the vulnerable in order to satisfy the Planning Inspectorate.

5 Supporting Information

Agenda Item Request

- 5.1 At its meeting on 25th June 2018, the Panel submitted a written question regarding the options for Market Lane. This raised the impact of the previous closure of the Chequers Bridge and its monitoring. In response to the answer supplied by officers, the Panel requested the possibility of options such as a tunnel or bridge to keep Market Lane open. This discussion included issues raised such as the consultation process with Network Rail, whether any modelling of the impact on journey times would be undertaken and the need for a permanent solution. As a result, the Panel requested that an agenda item be added to the Work Programme.
- 5.2 This report will provide members with a discussion on these themes, and the options which are available. It will also cover the impacts of these options, and the work being conducted with neighbouring authorities regarding studies on the feasibility of the various alternatives under discussion. As requested, a representative from Network Rail will also be in attendance at the meeting to field any questions of relevance to their organisation.
- 5.3 Network Rail have set out the timeline for submitting the DCO application following conclusion of their consultation 2 exercise. Approximately 72% stated that they strongly agree/agree and 23% strongly disagree/disagree with the scheme the remaining 5% undecided. This is an overwhelming sign that there is significant support from the public. However, the single most point of objection from those who were opposed to the scheme is the closure of Hollow Hill Lane (HHL).
- 5.4 The draft programme from Network Rail looks for the application to be submitted in Summer 2019, subject to Outline Business Case approval by the Department for Transport, with determination by late 2020. Enabling works to start in early 2021 with main construction works starting in 2022 and completing by the end of 2027 and services starting early 2028.
- 5.5 The council has invested in a new Slough Transport Model since the last closure and has with Network Rail commissioned modelling exercises to ascertain the impact of the closure and the surrounding area. The outputs have replicated the impacts that were faced by the residents when the experimental closure went in and therefore this now can be used for assessing not just the impact in the Langley area but also in the wider Slough area plus the South Buckinghamshire area.
- 5.6 As part of the work being undertaken on Market Lane/HHL, Slough Borough Council has been working on agreeing a brief for a feasibility study with Buckinghamshire County Council, Heathrow Airport Ltd and the DfT. The brief is to look at possible options for providing a link north and south of the Great Western Mainline following the closure of HHL, this has now been agreed with both authorities and the DfT/HAL. The remit will be to look at the issues and problems as a result of the closure what options are possible and the associated costs. This study will then be presented to

the DfT and then a briefing to members to discuss the options before determining which proposals can then proceed for further evaluation.

- 5.7 The study when complete will help the Council understand how any mitigation package can then be used to alleviate congestion, air quality issues and take into account future growth in the surrounding area.

Alternatives

- 5.8 At this stage the two local authorities have not indicated what the alternatives are to ensure that all options are considered; however among the considerations will be tunnels, bridges and widening.

Impact

- 5.9 The impact of HHL is well known following the experimental closure in 2016; now that the Slough Model is representative of the area we can assess the future impacts on the road network. This work is to start soon and will form part of the DCO application but also will form part of the mitigation that Network Rail will have to consider. The impact of construction is also being assessed and negotiations with Cemex in the Richings Park area are on-going to use the spoil generated by the Tunnel Boring Machine to fill in the void at gravel extraction site. This will significantly reduce the number of HGV movements by 50,000. Vehicle movements for Cemex at the peak are 242 a day (roughly 121 in and 121 out) a day so the project could potentially remove 120 of these daily movement during our tunnel boring.

Monitoring

- 5.10 Future monitoring will also be part of the DCO application in terms of air quality and what the effects are on residents as a result of the closure.

6 Comment of Other Committees

This report has not been taken by any other committees at Slough Borough Council.

7 Conclusion

In conclusion the panel is requested to note that officers are working with Network Rail to assess the impact of the closure of HHL and to work with the infrastructure sponsors in this area to find a solution that safeguards the Slough area post completion.

8 Background Papers

Agenda Papers and Minutes, Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel, 8th September 2016.